

Working towards ECDL

Using the Computer and Managing Files Module

Introduction

Over recent weeks, I hope you have enjoyed learning the basics of using a computer through using the various applications, talking with your tutor, members within your group, family and friends. As you will know, **I**nformation **C**ommunication **T**echnology (ICT) never stands still; there are always new avenues to explore!

Within this module, the learner needs to demonstrate knowledge and competence in using common functions of a **P**ersonal **C**omputer (PC) and its **O**perating **S**ystem (OS). You will discover how to adjust main settings of a PC and deal with non-responding applications. Discover how to organise your files by creating folders and sub-folders. This is similar if you were to do it manually with a filing cabinet. Once these have been created, simple housekeeping can be operated i.e. rename, move, copy and delete folders etc. and what facilities can be found within the print management.

Let us explore!

There are no large tasks within this module like the others you have attempted. Read this module, explore and try out the various procedures available. For evidence of the small tasks undertaken, you can do a **'Screen Capture'** and paste it into Word, add a note of what you have done, and then print off for your portfolio.

Methodology for Screen Capture

One of the easiest ways is to, press the 'Print Screen' key on your keyboard. Open up Microsoft Word and then click on the 'Paste' icon. To finish off, add your notes and then print.

To switch back to your original screen, look along the bottom of your screen (task bar) and select the application.

Another way is to use the Paint application found on most machines. Ask your tutor if you wish to know more.

First Steps

Start your computer (power up, boot up)

To do this, check that your computer is plugged into the electricity socket. Press the button to switch on your computer and your screen. Your computer will make some humming noises and some messages will flicker on your screen. Your computer is warming up and checking that everything is in working order.

The windows desktop

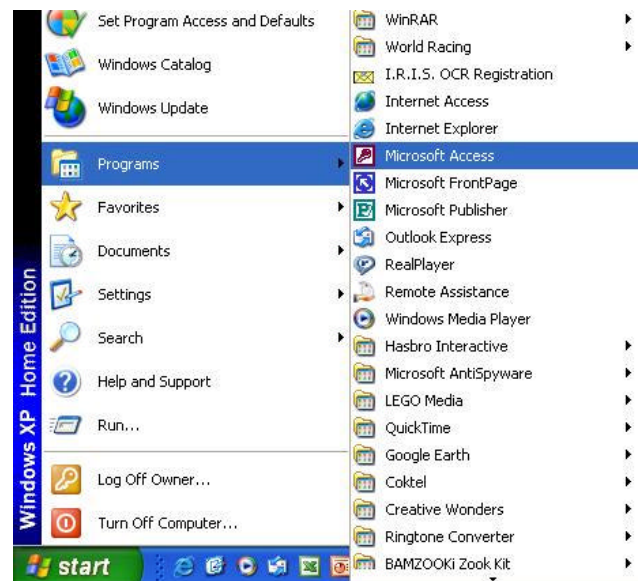
Once your computer has warmed up it will display a Windows desktop: little pictures called icons set against a coloured background.

Along the bottom of your screen, you will see a grey bar called a task bar. To the left you will see the word Start and to the right you will see a clock.



View your Start menu

Move your cursor to the bottom left of your screen so that it hovers over the Start button. Click the left button on the mouse and a panel similar to this will display a list of items. Some items have a small arrow to the right. This means that they contain another menu (or sub-menu) of further items.



Opening up an application

Let us open up Microsoft Word. To do this, click the Start button, move your cursor over to Programs and then over to Microsoft Word. By clicking on Microsoft Word your application will now open.

Have another go and this time, try and open Excel.

Switching between open applications

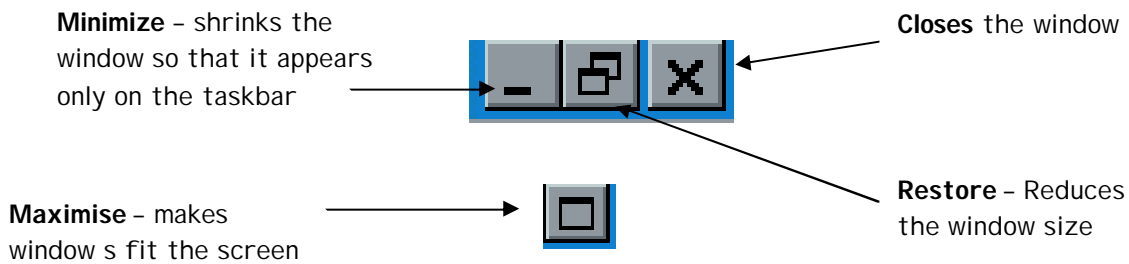
You have now 2 applications open. This is shown in the task bar at the bottom of the screen. Notice how it displays the names of your open applications.



If you click the Word icon on the Task bar, this will appear on your screen. If you click the Excel icon, Excel will appear and Word will now sit in the background.

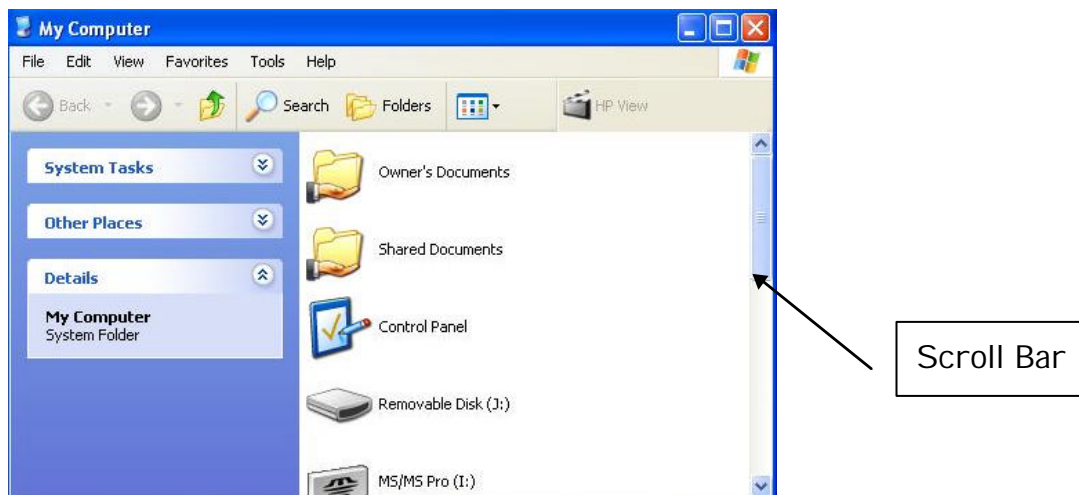
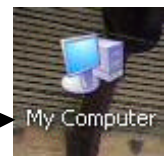
Use the four-control button

On the top right of each of the applications there are the following control buttons that enable you to manipulate the window. There are four buttons in total, but only three are displayed at any one time.



Open a desktop Window

A window created by launching an application such as Word or Excel is called an **application** window. A second type of window is known as a **desktop**. On your Windows desktop, locate the icon named **My Computer**. Do two fast clicks (this is called double-clicking) on the My Computer icon and a similar window to this should appear:



If a small screen appears on your screen, you can change the shape and size by following any of the options below:

- **Width** - To change the width of the window, click on its left or right edge. The cursor changes to a double-headed arrow. Left click and keep your finger down and drag the mouse left or right.
- **Height** - To make a window taller or shorter, click on its top or bottom edge. The cursor changes to a double-headed arrow. Left click and keep your finger down and drag the mouse up or down.
- **Width and Height** - To change both at the same time. Click the bottom right corner of the window. The cursor changes to a double-headed arrow. Left click and keep your finger down and drag the mouse.

Alternative, you could use click on one of the three buttons in the top right of the screen.

Scroll Bars

Sometimes a window may not be large enough to display all of your contents. In such cases a scroll-bar appears on the right and bottom of your screen. See the above image.

The position of the scroll box in relation to the scroll bar indicates which areas of the window you are viewing. When the scroll box is in the middle of the scroll bar, for example, the window is positioned halfway through its contents. The size of the scroll box tells you how much of the windows contents are visible. If the scroll box is half the length of the scroll bar, you can see half of the windows content.

Practice your window scrolling skills by reducing the My Computer window to half its normal size, and then scrolling the window.

Right click to display pop-up menus

As well as left clicking to select, dragging to move and double clicking to perform an action, Windows offers right clicking.

Right clicking on anything for instance, an icon or even the desktop itself displays a pop-up menu. This is known as a shortcut menu. The menu options shown depend on the item you right click. One option that a right click always displays is **Properties**. Familiarise yourself to what can be found in the properties panel.

Customising your Computer

In this section, you will be looking into the Control Panel. You can personalise appearance of your Windows desktop to suit your working needs or personal taste.

What are your computer specifications?

Sometimes you wonder, or others may ask the above question! To find out, from your desktop choose Start – Settings – Control Panel to display the folder. Double click the System icon. On the General tab on the System Properties, dialog box you can see various details regarding your PC, including the operating system type, processor type and amount of RAM. Familiarise yourself with the other tabs as well before clicking the Cancel button to close the dialog box.

Change your wallpaper

If you would like to change your Windows desktop background, right click on the Windows desktop and select Properties from the pop-up menu. Select the Background tab. Select the wallpaper.

Click the Display pull down list to view your options.

- Centre will position the image in the middle of your desktop.
- Tile will repeat the image horizontally and vertically until it fills the entire desktop.
- Stretch will distort the image to cover the entire desktop.

Change your scheme

This is a combination of colours, fonts and spacing that controls the appearance of such items as the title bars, scroll bars, and icons. Don't be afraid to experiment with the different settings, but before you start make a note of the original settings. To do this, right click on the desktop and select Properties. On the Appearance tab of the dialog box, click the Scheme pull down list to view your options. Click an option to select it and then OK.

Change your screen resolution

The most commonly used screen resolution settings are 800 X 600 and 1024 X 768. You can change your screen resolution as often as you wish. To do this, right click on the desktop and select Properties from the pop-up menu. Click the Settings tab. Click the slider in the Desktop area to decrease or increase the resolution.

Change the number of colours displayed

You can set the maximum number of colours that can be displayed on your monitor. The options available are determined by your combination of monitor and display adapter.

- High Color option displays over 65,000 colours.
- True Color option increases the upper limit to over 16 million colours.

The more colours displayed, the greater the demand on your computer. To do this, right click on the Windows desktop and choose Properties from the pop-up menu. Select the Settings tab. Click the color drop down list and select the one you require.

Setting the screen saver

To do this, right click on the Windows desktop and choose Properties from the pop-up menu. Select the Screen Saver tab. Click the Screen Saver pull down list and select the one you require. In the Wait box, type the number of minutes of inactivity before which the screen saver will activate. OK.

To clear the screen saver after it has started, move your mouse or press any key.

Setting the date and time

These should be set correctly, otherwise files you create and edit and emails will show misleading dates and times.

To do this, click Start – Settings – Control Panel. Double click on the Date and Time. Correct the date, time and time zone. Press the apply button and then OK.

Change your regional settings

Different regions and countries can use different currency symbols, and different ways of formatting times, dates and numbers. To change any of these settings, from the Control Panel select the Regional Setting by double clicking. Go through each one of the tabs displayed and change accordingly. Press the apply and then OK

Before you leave the Control Panel, familiarise yourself with the other items.

Help!

If you're not sat in a classroom and need desperate help with your work, an alternative option is to use the Help facility within Microsoft. You can use the Start - Help to guide you through to finding your answer within your PC.

The other Help facility is within each application. Choose the Help icon and a panel will appear. Browse through each section. Search for a problem and see if you can find the answer!

File Compression

This is also known as 'zipping'. This means that squashing files so that they occupy less space. The most common application is WinZip. A compressed file is known as an archive and, when created with the WinZip application, has a file name extension zip.

Compress the files in a folder using WinZip

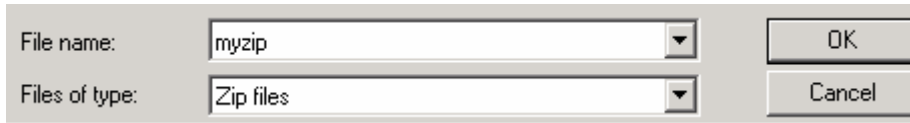


Open up WinZip and click the New button to display the Archive dialog box.

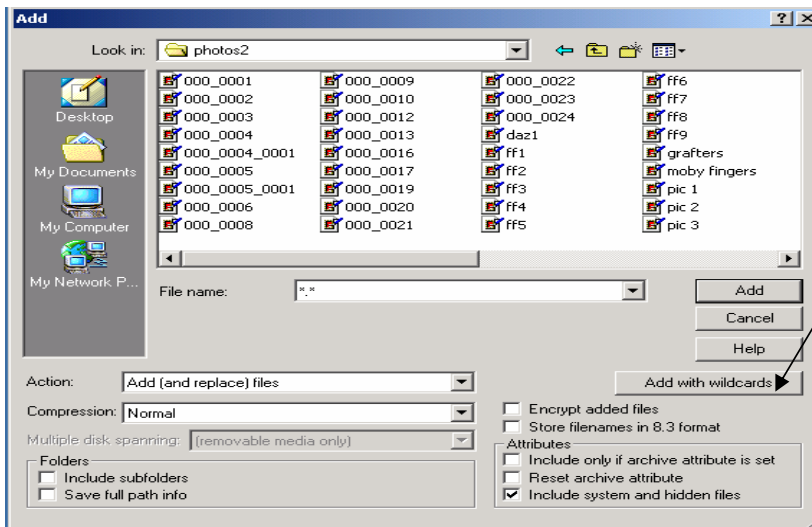
At the top of the dialog box, use the Save in: pull down list to specify the location drive and folders on your computer where you want to store your archive file. I.e. My documents



At the bottom of the dialog box, enter the name for the file and then click OK. You have now created a new empty archive file. Your next step is to add files to it.

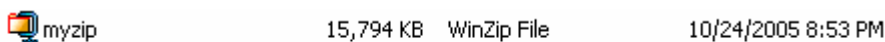


WinZip displays the Add dialog box. At the top of the dialog box, use the Look in: pull down list to select the drive and folder that contains the file or files that you want to include in your archive.



Click Add with Wildcards button to include all the files in the selected folder in the archive, and to save the archive after the files have been added. Click Close.

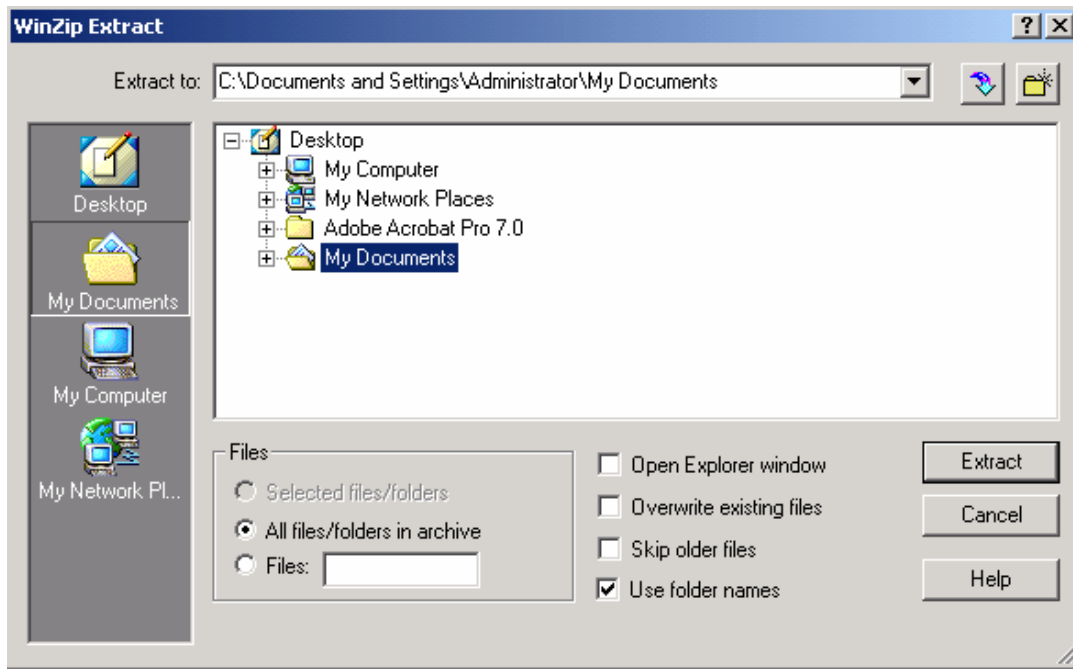
If you go to My Documents to view your archive file, it should look like this:



Decompress an archive

This is the opposite of zipping, as you will now be 'unzipping' a file.

Go back to the file you have compressed and right click on the archive file. From the pop up menu, click WinZip – Extract to... command. Windows launches the WinZip application.



Select your folders/drive area to where the files will be decompressed and then click onto Extract button

WinZip decompresses the archive into the selected folder. Extracting files from the archive does not affect the archive file.

Click close to close the archive file.

Working with Drives, Folders and Files

What are Drives?

A drive is a physical device that stores folders and files. All PC will have a hard drive that is named C: drive. Some computers may have 2 hard drives – C: drive and D: drive. The next available letter after the hard disk drive is given to the CD/DVD drive. This can be D: or E:. The floppy disk drive is named the A: drive, but these are now being faded out just like the B: drive which was also a floppy drive.

If your computer is on a network, you may be able to access the hard disk drives of other computers on that network. Others may be able to access your hard disk drive. A hard disk drive on a networked computer that is accessible by other on the same network is known as a network drive.

Using Windows Explorer

This is a program that allows you to view all the folders and files on your computer. It can be used for disk and file management. To start Windows Explorer, go to Start – Programs – Accessories – Windows Explorer.

A panel similar to this will appear:

Navigation buttons
Back, Forward and Up one level.

Contents of selected object.

Badminton
This is an example of a folder. It stores related information. It can contain files and other folders (which can also contain files). Sometimes folders are referred to as directories

Badminton details.
This is an example of a file. When you save your work onto a computer disk, it becomes a file. The icon above the file name identifies its type (this is a word file)

Displaying the contents of a folder

Double click on folder. It is better to double click the icon rather than the text, as sometimes you will not get the action you expect (if you have not double clicked properly). Instead, a box may appear round the text, waiting for your input. If this happens, press ESC and try again.

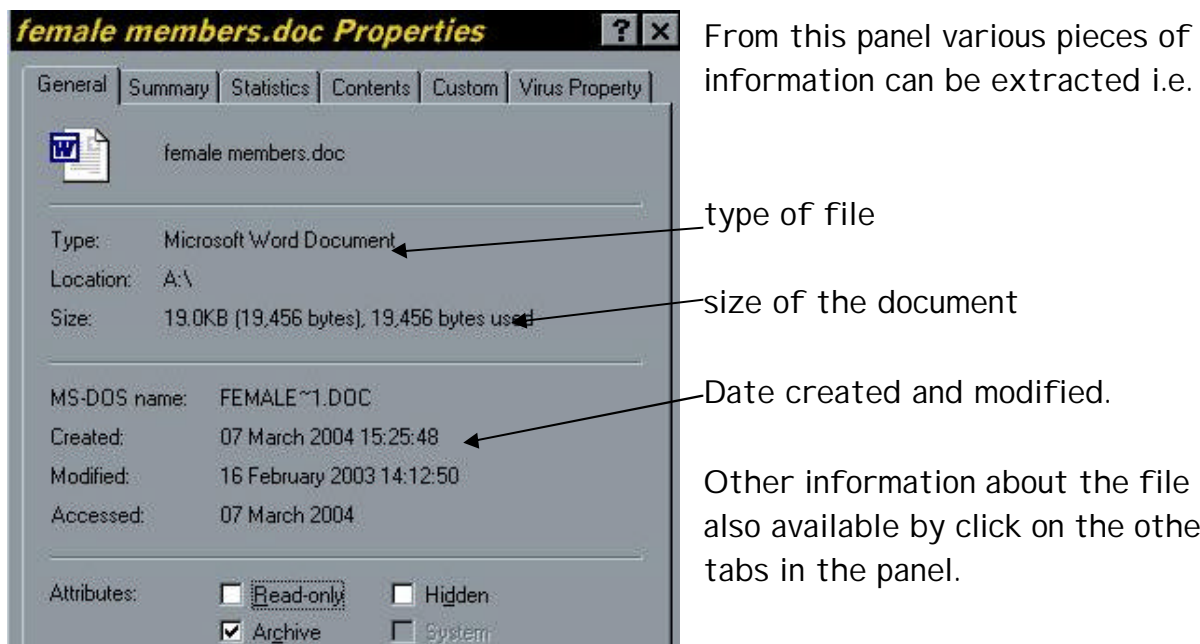
Navigating

At some stage, you may get lost. Use the navigation buttons shown on the previous page. To return to a previously view folder, click on the **Back** button arrow or select if from the **File** menu.

The **Address bar** list displays a list of other locations when the down arrow is clicked.

Examining Folders or Files

To obtain more information about folders and files, you can right click on the folder/file. A pop-up menu appears. Select Properties and a panel similar to this will appear.



When you save a file, the computer automatically gives an extension i.e. female1.doc. The .doc extension denotes that it is a Word file. Other common file extensions are:

- .xls - Excel
- .mdb - Access
- .ppt - PowerPoint
- .rtf - Rich Text Format - this is readable by most of the common word processor applications.
- .txt - Plain text file
- .htm - HTML files used on the World Wide Web
- .hlp - Online help file
- .tmp - Temporary file

.zip - Compressed file
.jpg, .gif, .tif, .bmp, .pcx, .psp, .ai - image files
.mp3, .wav - music/audio file
.avi - video/movie file

Creating a shortcut icon

You can create an icon of your desktop for any application, and double click the icon whenever you want to start that application. Such icon is known as a shortcut icon. To create a shortcut icon for notepad, find the note pad (usually found in Start – Programs – Accessories). Right click on the icon and select Create Shortcut. You will now see the icon with a small arrow. Click this icon and drag it to your desktop.



Practice my creating other shortcut icons i.e. Word, Excel, PowerPoint etc.

Folders

Think about the files you have recently saved on your disk. Some may be coursework, personal files or even work files. These may be better off within folders for easy retrieval. Folders give you the ability to organise your work. Files can be stored in folders. The following example is based on creating folders on your floppy disk, but remember folders can be created on your PC.

Creating Folders

On your floppy disk (A:\), you will be creating 3 folders

- course work
- personal work
- work

To do this, in the left-hand pane of Windows Explorer, click on the 3½ floppy (A). The contents of the floppy disk will appear in the right hand pane. Right click in a white section of this space and a menu will appear. Select New – Folder. Then insert the name of your folder and press Enter.

Renaming a file/folder

Right click on the file/folder and a menu appears. Select Rename. Key in the new name and press Enter.

Deleting a file/folder

Select the file/folder you want to delete by clicking on it. Press Delete. You will be asked to confirm the deletion. Click Yes. If you decide to delete a folder, all the contents will be deleted.

The Restoring a file from the Recycle Bin

A majority of the time you can restore a deleted file from a PC (note one deleted from a floppy disk) from the Recycle Bin. To do this, click on the Recycle Bin in the left hand pane. Select the file – Restore.

Emptying the Recycle Bin

It is a good idea to remove files from the Recycle Bin from time to time. To do this, click on the Recycle Bin. Then select File – Empty Recycle Bin.

Copying files/folders

Files can also be copied from one location to another. Such as a file from your floppy disk can be copied onto the PC. To do this you will be using the Copy & Paste facilities.

First, find the document you want to copy by highlighting it blue. Right click and a menu will appear. Select copy. Then choose the destination i.e. My documents. Move the mouse into a space in the right hand pane. Right click and select Paste.

Moving Files/folders

This is similar to the above procedures but instead of selecting Copy, you select Cut.

Selecting adjacent files/folders

You can select more than 1 file/folder to delete, copy or move. To do this select the first file and then hold the Shift key on the keyboard and select the last file you want.

Selecting no-adjacent files/folders

Select the first file/folder. Then hold the Ctrl key on the keyboard and select your files. If you select a file by accident, click on the file/folder and it will be de-selected.

Backing up a floppy disk

Backing up a disk means producing an exact copy of the contents of a disk. This is done as a security measure in case anything happens to the original disk. To do this, select the 3 ½ floppy (A:) – Right click – Copy Disk. Then follow the instruction on the screen.

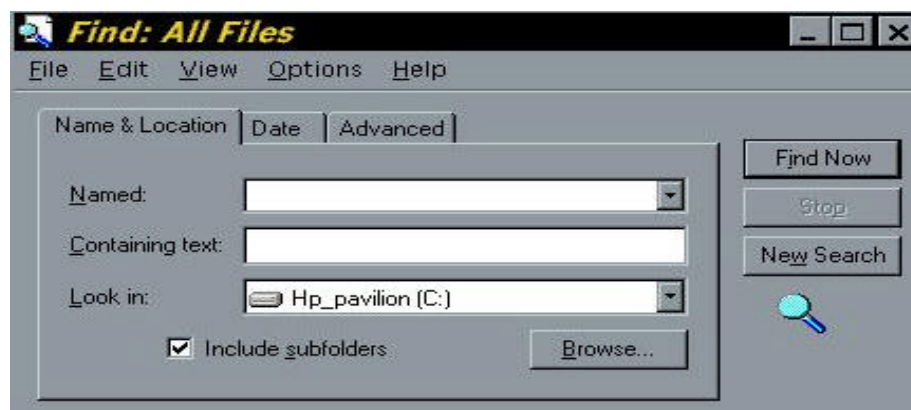
Formatting a floppy disk (A:)

Most new floppy disks are already formatted for using on your computer. If not, you will need to format them before use. Formatting prepares the disk so that it can be recognized by your computer, and information can be quickly and easily stores and access on it. Formatting a disk will also erase any information you have on your existing disk.

To format a disk in Drive A. Select the 3 ½ floppy (A:). Right click – Format. A panel will appear on your screen. Check the capacity of your disk. High Density will be 1.44 MB and Double Density will be 7.20 KB. Choose accordingly. Then select the Full button and click onto start. A message will appear once the formatting is complete.

Finding Files

To find a file/folder use the following method. Click onto Start (bottom left hand corner). Select Fine – Files or Folders. A panel will appear like below:



With the Name and Location tab select, key in the name of the file you want. If you know the location, enter that as well. Ensure Include subfolders is ticked if appropriate for your search.

If you do not know exactly what the file name is, key in just part of the name and use the wildcard symbol * i.e. Summer* - the computer will then show all the files starting with the word 'Summer'.

Window Management

Controlled Shutdown

Modern computers with 'power-saving' devices do not use much electricity and are generally best left switched on if you expect to use them throughout the day. However, if you do not expect to use the machine for some time, it is best to switch it off.

The normal procedure is to close down any files that are open by selecting File - Close. To close the application, select File - Exit. Then to switch the computer off, Select Start - Shutdown - OK.

Options

The **Log Off** option simply ends the user session. Windows is still loaded and the computer continues to run. The screen changes to the log on screen.

The **Restart** option ends your session, shuts down Windows and starts Windows again. This is better than shutting the system and letting it power off and then starting the computer by turning on the power. It is at power on that the computer has the most 'stress'.

The **Standby** option maintains your session but keeps the computer running on low power. All the information held in the memory is kept. To get back to using your computer, press the mouse button or any key on your keyboard.

System Errors

Sometimes your computer throws up an error. For instance the 'system hangs', the computer freezes and will not respond to any commands. Press the following key:

Ctrl + Alt + Delete

You will get the Windows Security Screen. Click the Task Manager button to get a list of the current applications. To end the task that might be causing the problem, select the application and click the End Task button. Note here, that you may lose your working file. So don't forget to save your work on a regular basis. You can also shut the computer down from this screen.

If there is no response to Ctrl + Alt + Delete and the system is still inactive, then press the restart switch on the main unit.

Printing

There are 2 common ways to print a document.

- 1 By click on the printer icon on your toolbar
- 2 By selecting File from the menu - Print - OK.

Other options available with print are:

Preview a file

Most applications offer the ability to preview a file on you screen before you print it. You can either click on the Print Preview icon on your toolbar or go to File - Print Preview. Click close to return to your file.

View the print queue

What jobs are currently in the print queue? To find out click Start -Settings - Printers. Double click the icon for the printer you want to check. Windows displays a list of all the print jobs in the queue.

Pause or resume a print job in the queue

You can pause and then resume a print job by choosing Start - Settings - Printers. Double click the icon for the printer you want to look at. Window displays a list of all the print jobs in the queue. Right click the required document, and choose the Pause or Resume option from the pop-up menu displayed.

Once a file has begun printing you cannot pause it. You may or may not be able to cancel it, depending on how far the printing has progressed.

Cancel a print job in the queue

There are many reasons why you wish to cancel a job. These could be you discover your printing is incorrect, you already have a copy or you decide to change your mind. To cancel a print job choose Start – Settings – Printers. Double click the icon for the printer. Select the file and then choose Document – Cancel Printing.

Change the order of jobs in the print queue

You can change the current sequence of jobs in the print queue by choosing Start – Settings – Printers. Double click the icon for the printer you want to look at. Select the file you want to move by clicking it, and drag it to the required place in the queue. Please note that you cannot move a file that is already in the process of printing.

Delete all jobs from the print queue

Choose Start – Settings – Printers. Double click the icon or the printer you are printing to. Choose Printer – Purge jobs.

Changing the default printer




Sometimes you may need to change the default printer to another due to wanting a better print out, or the printer is now working properly. From going to File – Print, in the Print panel that appears you can change the printer by clicking into the name section and then on the downward arrow to select an alternative. Click OK to print.

Another way you can change the default of a printer is to go to Start – Settings – Printers. The Printer panel will appear. Right click on the printer you want as a default and select Set as default.

Useful information

Below is some additional information that you may find useful when working with your computer. Please feel free to add your findings to the list. Show and tell others in the group your findings and how it could benefit them.

Action	Keyboard	Mouse	Right - mouse menu	Menu
Backup a floppy disk			Copy disk	
Backup to a floppy disk	Start menu, Programs, Accessories, System Tools Backup			
Copy file/folder	Select the file/folder			
	Ctrl + C	Click:  the Copy button	Copy	Edit, Copy
	Ctrl + V	Click  the Paste button	Paste	Edit, Paste
Create a new folder	Select where you want the new folder to be			
			New, Folder	File, New, Folder
Create a subfolder	Select the folder in which you want the subfolder to be and follow the steps for creating a new folder.			
Delete a file/folder	Select the file/folder			
	Delete		Delete	File, Delete
Display contents of folder		Double click the folder		
Exit Windows		Click the Close button 		File, Close
File, open an existing file	Ctrl + o			File, Open
File, open a new file	Ctrl + n			File, New
Find files/folders	Start menu, find Files, Files or Folders or in Windows Explorer file menu, Find			

Action	Keyboard	Mouse	Right - mouse menu	Menu
Format a floppy disk	Select drive			My computer, right click on the A Drive, Format. Follow the on screen instructions.
Load Windows Explorer	Window button + E			Start Programs, Windows Explorer
Move file/folder	Select the file			
	Ctrl + X	Click the Cut button 	Cut	Edit, Cut
	Click where you want to move the file/folder			
	Ctrl + V	Click the Paste button 	Paste	Edit, Paste
Notepad, open				Start, Programs, Accessories, Notepad
Notepad, close		Click the Close button 		File, Exit
Notepad, saving a document				File, Save or Save As
Notepad, print				File, Print
Printer, change default				Start, Settings, Printers
Recycle Bin, restore files	Double click on the recycle bin icon Select the file you want to restore			
			Restore	File, Restore
Recycle Bin, empty			Empty, Recycle Bin	
Rename file/folder			Rename	File, Rename

Action	Keyboard	Mouse	Right Mouse Menu	Menu
Save the current file	Ctrl + s			File, Save
Select files Adjacent Non-adjacent	Click the first file Holding down the Shift, click the last file Click the first file Holding down the Ctrl, click each file in turn			
Shortcut, creating		Drag object to the desktop	Create Shortcut	File, Create, Shortcut
Shutdown	Start, Shut Down			
Undo/ Redo the last action	Ctrl + z Ctrl + y	 		Edit, Undo Edit, Redo
View all file/folders attributes		Click the View  button arrow, Details		
View individual file/folders attributes		Click the  Properties button	Properties	File, Properties